

Ancient Egypt and Nubia

Primary Sources and Literature Readings**In Her Own Words**

by Hatshepsut, Queen of Egypt c. 1500 B.C.

Around 1500 B.C. young Hatshepsut became Queen of Egypt. When her husband, the king, died, Hatshepsut began to rule for her son, the prince and heir. Instead of turning over the throne to him, Hatshepsut made herself pharaoh. She ruled Egypt for more than twenty years. Here, she describes her right to the Egyptian throne.

Now my heart turns to and fro,
In thinking what will the people say,
They who shall see my monument in after years,
And shall speak of what I have done.

No one rebels against me in all lands.
He* gave it to him who came from him,
Knowing I would rule it for him.
I am his daughter in very truth,
Who serves him, who knows what he ordains.

*The Egyptian god Amun

Quoted from her obelisk inscription in *Ancient Egyptian Literature, Volume II: The New Kingdom*, Miriam Lichtheim, ed. and tr., 1976.

My command stands firm like the mountains and
the sun's disk shines and spreads rays over the
titulary of my august person, and my falcon rises
high above the kingly banner unto all eternity.

Quoted in *The Remarkable Women of Ancient Egypt* by Barbara Lesko, 1978.

Vocabulary Builder

ordain

order

Think It Over

1. Who are the people Hatshepsut refers to?

2. Why do you think Hatshepsut decided to make herself pharaoh?

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by Ankhesenpaton, Queen of Egypt c. 1350 B.C.

Queen Ankhesenpaton's husband, the legendary Tutankhamen, also died while ruling Egypt. They had no sons. Unlike Hatshepsut, Ankhesenpaton chose to find a new king by joining forces with another kingdom. Here, she asks that king for one of his sons to become her new husband and King of Egypt.

My husband, Nib-khuruia,* has recently died, and I have no son. But thy sons, they say, are many. If thou wilt send me a son of thine, he shall become my husband.

*Official name of Tutankhamen, who ruled c. 1379–1362 B.C.

Letter to Shuppiluliuma, the Hittite king (1362 B.C.), Quoted in *When Egypt Ruled the East*, Ch. 15, by George Steindorff and Keith C. Seele, 1942.

Think It Over

1. What solution did Ankhesenpaton use to find a new king to rule Egypt?

2. Hatshepsut and Ankhesenpaton solved the problems created by the king's death differently. Which solution do you think might work best? Which one would you use and why?
